

Of Praying for the KING.

A
S E R M O N

Preach'd at

BLACK-FRYARS,

October 24, 1714.

Being the first *LORD'S - DAY*

After the

King's Coronation.

By *S. WRIGHT.* K

Publish'd at the Request of many that heard it.

L O N D O N:

Printed for E. MATTHEWS, at the *Bible in Pat-*
ter-noster-Row; and JOHN CLARK, at the
Bible and Crown in Cheapside, near the Poultry.

MDCCXIV, Price 3 d,



PSALM LXXII. 1.

*Give the King thy Judgments, O God,
and thy Righteousness unto the King's
Son.*

THE Title of this Psalm tells us that it was composed *for Solomon*: Probably at the Time when he was first set upon the *Throne of Israel*. And the Close of the Psalm tells us it was the last Composition of *David*. Being left with his Son as a *Plan of Government*, by observing which, he might make both himself and his People happy.

The whole Psalm may be interpreted as *Mytical*; prophetically describing the Reign of that *Son of David*, whose Ver. 5. Kingdom is *throughout all Generations*; and of whom only it can be said, that *all Nations shall serve him*. Nor can we well imagine otherwise, than that He, who had such clear Notions of the promised Messiah, should in a particular manner, when dying, comfort himself with the Prospect of so gracious and glorious a Reign; at the same Time instructing his *immediate Successor* to conform himself, as much as might be, to such a Temper and Government as that of *JESUS CHRIST*. And for this Reason, as well as for his own Solace, *David*, in the Style of a Prophet, sets before *Solomon* the Honour and Happiness that should accompany and flow from such an Administration.

If the Kings of the Earth would make the RE-
DEEMER's Reign the Pattern of theirs, for Right-
teousness and Compassion, we might then hope to
see the Blessings here spoke of every where multi-
plied and secured.

Such Instructions as these, the Psalmist took a
most effectual way to render serviceable to his
Son, by introducing them with *Prayer* for him.
And this he was not content to do alone, but pen-
ning his Petitions for common Use, he taught all
his Subjects to join in the same Intercessions for
their King. *Give the King thy Judgments, O God,
and thy Righteousness unto the King's Son.*

Solomon, no doubt, is the Person meant both
by the *King*, and the *King's Son*; for he was not
only made a King, but descended from one.
However, the Reason of *David's* mentioning this,
was not to signify his immediate, Hereditary Right
to the Kingdom, (for *Adonijah* was his elder Bro-
ther) but to signify his being the Heir of the Pro-
mise, which above every Thing *David* had a re-
spect to.

Unto such Prayers as these, we have abundant
Reason to ascribe the after Glories of that Reign.
And had *Solomon* been as wise for himself, as he
was for his People, he had been happy beyond
Expression. 'Tis certain that *Israel* grew very
great, and rich, and prosperous, and all from the
Impressions that were made on the Mind of their
King, by these Instructions, and in answer to these
Intercessions.

Let us follow this great Example in praying for
Him that has now the Crown of this Kingdom
set upon his Head. And as the Supplicant in our
Text well knew what Petitions were fit to be of-
fer'd for Kings, let *this* be our Directory.

Whilst

Whilst some may be thought *Great* enough to advise the King, and propose Rules of Government *to him*: Whilst others may think themselves *Wise* enough to give Intelligence what will be done *by him*, we may account our selves *happy* enough if we can but be successful in praying *for him*. And yet I will venture to say too, that he is truly the *greatest* Man who has a prevailing Interest in the Court of Heaven; and he is the *wisest* Man that looks for all good from thence.

The Prayers of those that lye at a distance from the Throne, may have a greater Influence upon the Heart of Him that is seated on it, than all the Counsels of those that are about him. And as by such Applications to Heaven we are least likely to give Offence, so we may be most capable of doing Service. It shall, therefore, be my whole Business in the following Discourse to shew,

- I. What we are here directed to Pray for, as included in these two Words, *Judgments* and *Righteousness*.
- II. The Reason we have thus to Pray for Kings. And so conclude with some proper Reflections upon the whole.

I. What are we here directed to Pray for, when we ask of God his *Judgments* and *Righteousness*? These two Words may be considered as including in them all that is needful, both to the good Government, and Prosperity of Kings; as will appear by a distinct enlarging on them.

1. Let us enquire what is meant by the *Judgments of God*. A very great Critic in the Jewish Learning tells us, upon the use of this Word elsewhere, that as *Statutes* signify'd those Things which

which were only made Laws by a positive Command; so *Judgments* included all those Things that carried their own Reason and Equity along with them †. The Substance therefore of what the Psalmist prays for, when he asks for his Son *God's Judgments*, is, that he might have a true Sense of every Thing reasonable and fit to be done, either in the enacting, or executing of Laws; and that he might have a special regard to the Declarations of Almighty God in all.

So that by this Expression we are taught to Pray for our King in such a manner as this;

That he may not act Arbitrarily, as governing meerly by Will and Humour, but may in all Things shew a supreme Regard to Reason and Judgment. That He may not Govern without Law, by pleading and exerting his Power and Prerogative; but may always adhere to the Laws of the Land, and especially may look to the Law of God as the Rule of all He does.

Again, That he may be Wise and Just in all publick Treaties, managing them with the strictest Truth, and maintaining them with an unshaken Fidelity: That no Articles of Alliance may ever be falsly signed, or dishonourably broke by him.

Further, We Pray that he may judge rightly in the *Enacting* of Laws from Time to Time. That ill Men may be under necessary Restraints and Correction; but that Men of Honesty and Integrity, may have all proper Encouragement. That the *several Rights* of Men may be impartially considered, wisely stated, and safely preserved. That every Man's *Birthright* may be secured to him;

† Dr. Pocock on Malachi.

and that all his *acquired Rights*, I mean those Advantages which he has procur'd by Wisdom or Industry, may be quietly possess'd and enjoyed; and, especially, that his *Religious Rights*, the Liberty of judging for himself in Things that concern only the Worship of God, and the future Salvation of his Soul, may be inviolably maintained.

And here we should pray that particular Promises of this Nature, after they are made, may be religiously and strictly observed.

To proceed, in praying that God would give the King his Judgments, we ask for him a heavenly skill and discerning in *executing*, as well as *making* Laws; that he may be enabled rightly to distribute publick Rewards and Punishments. That such as are most eminent for Knowledge and Wisdom in his Affairs, as also for Integrity and Uprightness in their Behaviour, may be promoted to Places of Power and Trust: And that the Ignorant, the Insolent, the Mercenary, and the deceitful Man, may never be able to tarry in his sight, or at least, may not be empower'd to act in his Name.

That He may have Judgment from God, to make Choice of proper Persons for every Business and Commission.

That such as are sent Abroad to *Foreign Courts*, may be chosen and trusted, according to the Direction of that wise King, who has observed, *That a wicked Messenger falleth into Mischief, but a faithful Ambassador is Health*, Prov. 13. 17.

That He may have *Counsellors* also, like the Men of *Iffachar* of old; Men *understanding the Times, that knew what Israel ought to do* *. Such as

* 1 Chron. 12. 32.

8 Of Praying for the King.

have the *Spirit of Counsel resting upon them*†; and not like those Counsellors of the King of Egypt, whose *Wisdom became brutish*||.

That in the King's *Houſhold* He may have every Office and Place of Trust fill'd with Men like *Joſeph*, that was over the Houſe of *Pharo*'s; *diſcreet and wiſe in all that was committed to him*, Gen. 41. 39.

That all the *Commiſſioners* of *Taxes*, and *Ex-actors* of the King's *Dues*, may be *Peace* and *Righ-teouſneſs*; not given to *Violence* or *Falſhood*, or to do any Thing that is *oppreſſive*, Iſa. 60. 17, 18.

That thoſe who ſit by the King's Appointment in *Courts* of *Judicature*, may diſcern aright in the *Causes* that are brought before them, and may be impartial in *decreeing Juſtice*: That ſuch *Iniquities* as are to be *puniſh'd by the Judge**, may not eſcape; and that *Judgment* in no caſe may be *perverted*; Deut. 21. 17.

That ſuch may be choſen to be *inferiour Magiſtrates*, and put in *Commiſſions of Peace* throughout the Nation, as are Men of exemplary Goodneſs and Integrity; Lovers of God, their King, and their Country, and careful to ſuppreſs whatever is contrary to the real Intereſt of any of theſe.

Yet further, as it is the Glory of our preſent King to be a profeſſed *Chriſtian*, and *Proteſtant*, we ſhould intreat That mighty Lord, whoſe Reign and Government the *Pſalm* before us foretels, and who has now all Things actually committed to him, that He would confer upon our Sovereign all *ſaving Graces*, and *ruling Virtues*; and ſo enable Him, both by his Example, and Authority, to adorn

† Iſa. 11. 2. || Iſa. 19. 11. * Job 31. 28.

the Doctrine of God our Saviour, and to defend the Faith of the Gospel in its Purity, against all the Enemies and Corrupters of it. That He may have such Wisdom and Judgment in all Matters of Religion, as never to try the Obedience of any of his Subjects, by Commands that would invade the Province of the great Father of Spirits, and Governour of Consciences; nor ever narrow his Thoughts to any Articles or Canons of Mens prescribing, so as to exclude those from his Favour and Protection, that sincerely believe, and would cheerfully comply with, every Thing which they apprehend is revealed, or required in the Word of God.

And here we may Pray, that such as are called by the King to *minister* before Him in *sacred Things*, may be enabled *so* to explain, and enforce the great Truths of Religion, as to show that they are not seeking *themselves*, or siding with *any*, by making the Scripture subservient to their own, or others *temporal Interest and Designs*; but that they may speak at all Times, as becomes the *Oracles of God*, and may behave themselves suitably to their Characters and Profession: That, by *their* means the Judgments of God may be known and kept in mind, and have a happy Influence on all publick Administrations.

Once more, as *Punishments* are necessary in some Cases, (when gentleness and forbearance toward particular Persons may prove an Injury to the whole Community) so we should pray that *Justice* may take place in *punishing* all that Wickedness and Impiety that may any way threaten the Public. I mean, when such Iniquities break out, as either *disquiet* the Land, and excite dangerous Animosities and Divisions; or else *defile* the Land, and would bring down Judgments from Heaven if suffered to spread and prevail.

B

And

And since it is mention'd as one Glory of that Reign, described after our Text, that the *Oppressor should be broken to Pieces*, we may be here directed to Pray, that such as are for persecuting others, may feel all the Marks of a just Displeasure themselves, as far as may be necessary to subdue their Tempers, and to rescue the Oppressed from their Power and Malice.

All these Things we may look upon as included in this Petition, *Give the King thy Judgments, O God.*

2. Let us now enquire what is meant by the *Righteousness* pray'd for in the following part of the Verse. Upon the Use of this Word in the *Prophecy of Isaiah*, *Gataker* tells us, that it signifies not only a gracious Disposition of Mind *in us*, but the Benignity of God *toward us*; and this he proves from several other Places of Scripture*: And then, as *Righteousness* or *Benignity* is put for the *Fruit* or *Effect* of it, so it signifies a *Confluence of all good Things*; or a *State well composed, and wanting nothing to its compleat Happiness*. This he adds, is called *God's Righteousness*, because it comes *from him*; and 'tis called the *Righteousness of a Person, or People*, because conferr'd *on them*: Of both which he produceth several Instances.

When *David*, therefore, requests this *Righteousness* for his Son, he desires, that he may be interested in the Grace and Favour of God; and being conformed, as much as may be, to his Clemency and Benignity; may have all the Blessings which result from thence.

The *Particulars* included may be such as these. When we intreat the Favour of Almighty God for the King, we Pray that all the Perfections of the Deity may be engaged for him, and with him;

* See the *Assemblies Annotations* on Isa. 48. 18.

Of Praying for the King. 11

and that he may have a very inward and prevailing Sense of their being so; that he may look to Infinite Wisdom, Power and Goodness, and to the never failing Care of a Divine Providence, as continually guiding, protecting, and blessing him in all his Administrations. That, by this means, his *Heart may be fixed, trusting in God*; neither fearing evil Persons, nor evil Tidings, but *judging the People with Righteousness, and the Poor with Judgment* *.

That Atheism and Prophaneness, and Lying, and Flattery, and Slander, and Contentions, and every scandalous Immorality, may be discountenanced, but that the *Righteous may flourish* †. That *Mercy and Clemency* may take Place, and so the meanest Subjects the King has may be as dear to him as they are to God ‖. That his Fame may be great for Goodness and Compassion, defending and succouring those that fly to him for Relief and Protection: Yea, concerning himself as tenderly for the Lives and Souls of the lowest, as the highest of his People; and *redeeming* those from *Deceit and Violence*, who are otherwise like to be ruined by such as are too Subtle, or too Mighty for them *.

And then may all the Blessings that flow from the Favour of Heaven, and a merciful Administration, every where abound. That all Ranks and Degrees of Men, in every part of the King's Dominions may be made truly happy. That those, more particularly, who have been unjustly expos'd to Reproach and Contempt, may dwell in Safety and Comfort; and *God, even their own*

* Ver. 3. of this Psalm. † Ver. 7. ‖ See Bishop Patrick's Paraphrase on Verse 2. * See the same Paraphrase, Verse 13, 14.

*God may bless them, That Ephraim may not envy Judah, nor Judah vex Ephraim ; but the Mountains may bring Peace to the People, and the little Hills by Righteousness *.*

By such a manner of Government, let the King's Power and Dominion be greatly encreased ; that such as dwell in the Wilderness, even such as are rude and barbarous, may bow before him ; and his Enemies that refuse it, may be humbled to the Dust †. That the Princes of other Countries also may honour him with their Presents, and may approach him with all the Marks of Respect ||.

At the same Time, may the Earth be fruitful in yielding her Increase, and the City flourish *, both in its Stores and in its Inhabitants, its Health, and its Trade : And may it be our chief Glory to have GOD, the GOD of ISRAEL, who only doth wondrous Things †, residing amongst us ; and from one Generation to another let him be acknowledged and glorified by us. And where-ever our King and Nation are known, and spoke of, in the whole World, let the Name of our God also be glorious ||.

Thus may the King live long, and prosper, whilst Prayers are continually made for him ; and, in the noblest Instances of wise and gracious Government, may he daily be praised *.

To compleat all, after his Reign (attended with so many Blessings) has been lengthened out to its appointed Period, we should pray that the King's Fame and Memory may endure for ever †. And, in his Posterity after him, may Ages to come be always blessed. That the KING'S SON may be every way qualified to be his SUCCESSOR ; inheriting not only the Dominions, but the Virtues,

* Ver. 3. † Ver. 9. || Ver. 10. * Ver. 16. † Ver. 18. || Ver. 19. * Ver. 15. † Ver. 17.

and the Blessings of his Father : That his Children also may be multiplied, and grow up to adorn our Court and Kingdom : And that there may never be wanting such of the King's Family, to sit on his Throne, as may rule in Judgment and Righteousness.

II. I shall now lay before you some Reasons why we should thus pray for the King. And as I cannot urge this more seasonably than at the present, so I doubt not also to prove, that it is a Matter of very great importance to us.

1. *It is expressly commanded in the Sacred Scriptures.* That known Place, 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2. may serve instead of many. *I exhort, therefore, that first of all Supplications, Prayers, Intercessions, and giving of Thanks be made for All Men ; for Kings, and for all that are in Authority.* This is one Part of the whole Counsel of God, that Timothy, as a Minister of the Gospel, is required to insist on : And 'tis an Exhortation that every Man, who professes himself a Christian, is bound to observe and obey. It is so very plain, that it admits of no Evasions ; and it is so very full, that there are no kind of Petitions, whether for averting evil things, or bestowing of good things, or for extraordinary Supplies on extraordinary Occasions, but may and should be offered for Kings ||.

2. *The first Christians were eminent Examples of this Practice.* 'Tis a famous Passage that we have in * *Tertullian's Apology for the Christians*, where he

|| One Word used in that Text is *dehseis*, or Deprecations : another is *proseucha*, Supplications : and a third is *ekdehseis*, Occasional Intercessions.

* Cap. 30. Oramus pro omnibus Imperatoribus, vitam illis prolixam, imperium securum, domum tutam, exercitus fortes, senatum fidelem, populum probum, orbem quietum, & quæcunque hominis & Cæsaris vota sunt.

says,

says, *We pray for all the Emperors, that to them may be granted long Life, a quiet Reign, a well settled Family, valiant Armies, a faithful Senate, a loyal People, and a peaceful World, with whatever else they wish for, either as Emperors or Men; if, considering Tertullian's Style, it may not better express his Sense to say, with whatever else are the Wishes of Prince or People.*

Lactantius with greater Elegance speaks to the same purpose, when he tells *Constantine*, *In our daily Prayers we supplicate God, that he would, first of all, keep You, whom he hath made the Keeper of other things; then, that He would inspire into you a Will, whereby you may ever persevere in the Love of God's Name, which must greatly conduce to the Good of all, both to you for your Happiness, and to us for our Quiet †.*

And *St. Chrysostom*, in his *Homily* on that of the *Apostle* to *Timothy* just quoted, observes, that altho' Kings did not then worship God, but remained in Infidelity a long time after; yet Christians were required to pray for them: and lest it should be thought a piece of Flattery to do this for Kings alone, when they were Opposers of Christianity, they are required to pray for all *Men*, and this they did even for those that despitefully used them and persecuted them. But then the same *Author* further observes, that God has commanded a special Regard to Kings, as they are appointed for a *Common and public Good* ||. And if the Spirit and

† Cui nos quotidianis precibus supplicamus, ut te imprimis, quem rerum custodem esse voluit, custodiat: deinde inspiret tibi voluntatem, quâ semper in amore Divini nominis perseveres; quod est omnibus salutare, & tibi ad felicitatem, & nobis ad quietem.

|| Ὁ ὁ Θεὸς εἰς τὸ κοινὴν χερίσιν τὰς ἀρχὰς διατάξατο.
Hom. VI. in Ep. 1. ad Tim.

Temper

Temper of Christianity could so far influence Men to pray for *Bad Princes*, how much more should it inspire us with the warmest Desires for the Welfare and Prosperity of *Good ones*.

3. Such as are advanced to so High a Station do very much *stand in need of our Prayers*. The *Affairs* which they are called to manage are *exceeding Great*, whether we consider that Influence they have in Matters of Religion, or in the Disposal of every thing that is dear to Men in this World. It was told King *William* and Queen *Mary* at their *Coronation*, "That Kings had *one Prerogative*,
" which few of them were willing to make use of,
" and that is *Converting the World*, not by Dra-
" goons, sanguinary Laws, or cruel Edicts, but
" by Examples of true Religion and good Life.
Since therefore they have such a mighty Power, should we not pray, that by their means true Piety and Religion may be propagated and brought into Request?

And shall we not be sensible, That they need our Prayers in this respect, when we consider what vast *Temptations* they have to cast off the Fear of God, and to act contrary to the Faith and Precepts of the Gospel? Having every thing that may cherish their Frailties and Corruptions, they are *more* in danger than *other Men*: And having very few Examples of *Religious Princes*, that have either liv'd before them, or that live in the same Age with them, they are much more likely to tread in the Steps of those that have *done Evil*, than of such as have *done well, in the sight of the Lord*. As the Author I just now quoted observes,
" The *Miracle* of a truly *Religious Prince* is perhaps
" none of the smallest Effects of Omnipotence,
" and it runs not the hazard of losing its Value by
" being shewed *too often*. And what adds to all, if
we

we consider our Kings as placed at the Head of the Church in these Nations, yea at the Head of the whole Protestant Interest, at the same time that they are exposed to such great Temptations, we cannot but think they stand in need of the Prayers of all their Subjects. And the deeper Sense of Religion any have in themselves, the more will they be concerned to plead for their Sovereign.

Again, if we look to *Civil Affairs*; as the comfortable Enjoyment of all worldly things does very much depend upon the Conduct of Kings; so it should be our Care to put up continual Prayers for them, that they may rule with Wisdom and Equity. Sometimes Matters very *doubtful* are brought before them, and yet according to their Determination in 'em, *Multitudes* are like to be made *happy* or *miserable*: They are also liable in many Cases to be misled and misinformed, to their own Prejudice as well as the Hurt of others; and may have wrong Apprehensions of those to whom they commit their own Cause, and the Cause of their Subjects: And once more, they may be liable to those Transgressions which may bring down Judgments from Heaven upon their People, (as *David's numbering the Israelites*, and *Hezekiah's not rendering to the Lord according to the Benefits done to him*, brought *Wrath* upon *Judah* and *Jerusalem* :) And therefore by all these Considerations we are called upon earnestly to pray for them, that God would at all times *Guide* and *Direct* them, and that, as he promised *Joshua*, *he would never fail them nor forsake them*, Josh. i. 5.

To this let me add, that sometimes they may be concerned in Treaties or Negotiations of such a Nature, as may not only affect a *Part*, but the *Whole* of their Subjects; yea not only their *own* Dominions, but many *other* States and Kingdoms; and

and that not only for *one Age*, but to *succeeding Generations*; and in such extraordinary Cases they want extraordinary Help and Assistance from Heaven, and therefore should be more fervently pray'd for.

Once more, if withall, we consider how many Oppositions, *Enemies*, and *Calamities* Kings are expos'd to, they will appear greatly to want our Prayers. Sometimes their *Good Designs* are loaded with Objections and Difficulties by such as are in contrary Measures and Sentiments about their *own Court*. At other times they are threatned by the Power and Confederacies of *Foreign Adversaries*. They are also liable to many Dangers from *secret Plots* and Conspiracies: And in short, they are subject to innumerable *Diseases* and *Casualties*, as well as our selves; their *Breath is in their Nostrils*, and in that very Day that Death overtakes them, their *Thoughts perish* *. So that on these accounts it is necessary we should pray to Him, who is the great *Preserver of Men* †, to continue their Lives, to protect their Persons, and to give them Skill and Courage to overcome all their Difficulties, and all their Enemies, and so to perfect every wise and good Undertaking.

4. We should pray for the King, as it is a *Proof of our Loyalty and Respect to him* ||. This will follow from the former Head; for if there be really such *Need* of our Prayers, we cannot withhold 'em without very great *Disrespect* and *Want of Affection*. It is natural to wish well to those for whom we have any Friendship or Esteem; and

* Psal. 146. 4.

† Job 7. 20.

|| *These Arguments, with many more, those that are desirous, may find enlarg'd upon in a different manner, and much more largely, by Dr. Barrow, Vol. I. p. 122.*

when we would do this in the most solemn manner and to the best Purposes, we make such good Wishes a part of our Prayers. And certainly I cannot prove my sincere and hearty Regard to the Welfare of Another, better than in joining my Petitions *for Him* with those that I offer up for my *own Soul*: So that praying for the King must undoubtedly argue much greater Esteem and dutiful Respect for him, than any outward Homage or humbling our Bodies before him can do.

Besides, as to the generality of People, this is the only solemn way in which they are capable of testifying their Loyalty; and the only way by which they can promote the King's Welfare and Prosperity. This, therefore, is a Return that *all* should be ready to make, for that Quietness, and those Mercies they enjoy under the King's Care and Government.

Further, good Princes have particularly requested this of their Subjects; and express Orders are given for inserting their Names in the public Liturgies, that Men may be obliged to pray for them in the most distinct manner. If therefore we fail in this, we are guilty of Disobedience and Undutifulness to a very high Degree.

5. By praying for the King, *we are most likely to obtain those things for our selves, which would render us happy under his Reign and Government.* So that if we consult our *own Interest*, it will put us upon the Practice of this Duty. 'Tis by this means that we may hope to live *quiet and peaceable Lives in all Godliness and Honesty.* By this means, we that are Protestant Dissenters, may in time possibly convince those that yet retain their Prejudices against us, of their Mistakes concerning us; or at least by this means we may gain such Favour in the Eyes of the King, as to protect us from all their Hatred

Hatred and Ill-will. And if notwithstanding our Steadiness to the Interest of our Country thro' several Changes and Trials; if notwithstanding our peaceable Behaviour under the greatest Outrage and Insults of a heated Rabble, as well as under the much more discouraging Proceedings of the higher Powers; I say, if notwithstanding all we can do, we cannot gain the good Opinion of those who are resolved to be our Enemies: yet let us by our Prayers still intercede for the *Public Welfare*, and even for *Theirs*: Let us beg the Preservation of our Liberties and the *English* Constitution, and for our Sovereign let us pray, that he may live to reign as intirely in the Hearts of *all* his Subjects, as he now does in *ours*.

Let us not be solicitous or eagerly concerned as to the Treatment we may further meet with, but by *Prayer and Supplication making known our Requests unto God*, let us commit our selves and our All to him.

Those that know not how to make successful Applications to Princes or Great Men, may yet be graciously accepted in the Court of Heaven; and by that means may secretly and unseen, in a strange, but very powerful manner, influence all the Affairs of the Public.

By this means perhaps, the Advantages which our Sins have forfeited, may be restored; or some new way found out for the removing our present Hardships. By this means God may change the Tempers of those who have hated us without a Cause, and may encrease the Friendship of those who have always own'd us as Brethren, and may render the King a Glorious Instrument of uniting all his People. And here we may very well make use of the Words of the Psalmist, and say, *O God, thou hast cast us off, thou hast broken us; thou hast*

been displeased, O turn thy self to us again. Thou hast made the Earth to tremble,—heal the Breaches thereof, for it shaketh *. And in all healing Attempts, let the King joy in thy Strength, O Lord, and in thy Salvation let him greatly rejoice †.

This, I am perswaded, if duly attended to, would be found the surest and shortest way of accomplishing our best Wishes; since the God we pray to, is able to turn the Hearts of Kings, and of all Men, which way soever he pleases, and can over-rule even the most contradicting Events, to serve his own wise Purposes and Designs. Yea further, by Prayer we may avert those Judgments which otherwise might prevail to eclipse the Glory and allay the Happiness of our Sovereign in his wisest and most successful Administrations. And, as sometimes the best Princes have met with Rebukes thro' the Prophaness and Indevotion of their People; so it should be our Concern, that we do not thus bring common Calamities or the Effects of any ill Management upon our selves.

6. The last Reason I shall mention why we should pray for the King, is this, *Our Experience that it has not been in vain to put up such Prayers unto God.* We may look upon it as a very great Encouragement to renew our Prayers, and to persevere in them, that God has both formerly, and now of late, done so much in return to our Supplications. The famous *Revolution* in 1688. ought always to be number'd amongst the most signal and eminent Answers to Prayer; and, as the Consequence of that, we must add also his present Majesty's *Accession to the Throne* of these Kingdoms. But lest it should be thought too much for us to say, that what is now brought about is owing to the

* Psal. 60. 1, 2.

† Psal. 21. 1.

earnest Prayers of any particular Set of Men, I shall content my self only in observing these Matters of Fact ; that the Protestant Succession, as fixed by Law, was with greatest Concern and Constancy pray'd for amongst us ; and it has now, to our surprize, taken effect. The King's safe *Arrival* after his *Proclamation*, was still daily pray'd for by us ; and how remarkably he was favour'd in all Parts of his Journey, especially by the Winds, the Waves and the Season, I need not inform you. These, altho' by some esteem'd inconsiderable things, yet as they are all under the Direction of a Divine Providence, the least of them should not be overlook'd by us.

There is, let the Irreligious say what they will, there is already, such a plain Proof of the Agency of Heaven in the raising the King to his Throne, and setting the Crown upon his Head, that all well affected Persons should encourage themselves from thence, in their further Addresses to God for him : I am much mistaken if there be not very sufficient ground to expect far greater Things than any we have yet seen.

'Tis but a little while since We in this Place, were fixing our Thoughts on those Expressions of *David*, in the close of the *Tenth Psalm*, *Lord thou hast heard the Desire of the Humble : Thou wilt prepare their Heart ; thou wilt cause thine Ear to hear : To judge the Fatherless and the Oppressed, that the Man of the Earth may no more Oppress.* And so much already has been done for the verifying of what was then said, that I cannot forbear thinking, the fervent believing Prayer of the Righteous, may, in God's Time, procure the accomplishment of what remains.

It seems to be more than a common Day that now opens upon us, in the Prospect we have, from his

his Majesty's DECLARATION, of composing our present Differences. Tho' Men may not be brought to think *alike*, if by such Measures they may but be brought to think *charitably*, it is enough to make us Happy. And I believe, after all the dangerous Experiments of Ambitious, or positive Conceited Men, to bring all about them into their own Sentiments, this will be found the only safe and successful Attempt to unite us, *viz. The reconciling Mens Tempers to one another, whilst their Thoughts are allowed to vary.* God only, 'tis true, can shed Abroad this Love in our Hearts; and he only could inspire our Sovereign with such Intentions to Rule over us: As therefore he has effected the one, we may with greater Expectation Pray for the bringing about of the other.

Thus let *all the Ends of the World, remember, and turn unto the Lord: And all the Kindreds of the Nations worship before him. For the Kingdom is the Lord's, and he is the Governour among the Nations,* Psal. 22. 27, 28.

I shall now close this Discourse with the following Remarks upon it, for our further Instruction.

1. From this Direction to Pray for Kings, we see *where our chief Hope and Trust should be:* Namely, in that God we pray to, not in those we pray for. By our Prayers we acknowledge, in the most express manner, that earthly Kings are under the Direction, and subject to the Power of a higher Sovereign: And therefore we should conclude with the Psalmist, *It is better to trust in the Lord than to put Confidence in Man: It is better to trust in the Lord than to put Confidence in Princes,* Psal. 118. 8, 9.

I would not, by this, be thought to check the glad Expectations, which, amongst the wiser and better part of the Nation, have so much carried out Men's Hearts to our present Sovereign; but I
would

would rejoice in being serviceable to temper, and qualify those Expectations, by directing your Trust aright, and engaging you chiefly to hope in him by whom King's reign, and Princes decree Justice.

This is a Point that I wish may be thoroughly considered and fixed, so as that we may not provoke God, by a false Dependence, to forsake both us and our King. We have been too apt to trust in those that have fail'd us, or been taken from us; and God has still many ways to chastise this kind of Idolatry if we continue in our Sin and Folly: But if by Faith and Prayer we look to him whose Throne is in the Heavens, the greatest Things we can expect are not too great for him to do. And now, O Lord, What wait we for, our Hope is in thee, Psal. 39. 7.

2. When we are directed to pray for the King, we should take care not to do any Thing that would contradict our Prayers, either as to God, or our Sovereign. That is, we should take care not to offend the Being we pray to, by despising, or dishonouring him; nor to injure the Person we pray for, by unadvised Words or Actions, in our common Conversation and Behaviour.

Excessive Drinking, prophane Swearing, and Blaspheming the Name of God, hectoring, quarrelling and abusing those that may have some Thoughts different from their own, are a Reproach to all that pretend to Religion or Loyalty: And we may well wonder, that such Men as are setting their Mouths, and hardening their Hearts, against Heaven at all other Times, can yet join in the public Prayers of the Church, and expect to be regarded in so doing. These are not, certainly these are not, the Supplicants that shall prevail with Heaven; for we are told expressly, That the Prayer of the Wicked is an Abomination to the Lord. He that pretends to espouse the Interest of his King, so as to dishonour his God, whatever he may think, is one that does his Prince more hurt than good.

Again, such Conversation as shall lead Men to Censure their Governours upon every Thing they dislike; or to dictate and prescribe to 'em, where they are neither by their Qualifications nor Business called to it, is very unbecoming, and unsuitable to our Prayers.

In

24 Of Praying for the King.

In praying for the King we solemnly commit the Guidance and Direction of him and his Affairs to God but by such Conversation Men set up for Governours and Directors themselves. And then further, Prayer teaches us to ascribe all Events to a Divine Providence; whereas, such Conversation too much fixes our Thoughts upon second Causes. And then again, forward and uncautious Talk serves only to raise Opposition to the Things we desire; or to give handles for the carrying on Designs that we fear. In these Instances, therefore, and such as these, we should take care not to contradict the Language, or hinder the Success of our Addresses to Almighty God.

3. *We should humbly look after our Prayers, to remark what Answers are given to 'em.* This is necessary to our glorifying God in one of his Titles, as he has stiled himself in Scripture, *A God hearing Prayer.* By this means every Mercy will be doubled that we receive, (either in Kind, or in Equivalent) upon our requesting of it. And by this means we shall know how to rectify our Mistakes, when at any Time the Course of Providence may run counter to our Desires; and so we shall better learn that great Lesson of a Christian, *Submission to the Will of God*, and an unreserved committing all Things to him. Our Observations of this kind will serve generally to convince us, that God never denies the Requests of those that sincerely seek him, but when it is best so to do; and when some greater future Good is to be brought about thereby.

But this especially should we continue to Pray, and wait for, according to the Direction of the Prophet *Amos*, Chap. 5. 21—24. with which I close, That, instead of a false Zeal for the solemn Assemblies, and crying out for the Church, for *Burnt-Offerings, Meat Offerings*, and the externals of Worship; instead of the noise of Songs, and the melody of Viols, with all the Arts of raising a false Joy in the Land; instead of these Things, I say, we should pray, That Judgment may run down as Waters, and Righteousness as a mighty Stream.

6 MA 50
F I N I S.

Error. P. 16. l. 21. read commit both their own Cause, and, &c.

i
a
rs
er
e;
ur
r-
o-
or
n-
ke
he

rk
ur
ed
his
e,
ng
ti-
ro-
we
in,
m-
his
od
ek
me

nd
net
in-
ng
er-
ise
of
gs,
wn

cc.